

NEW-YORK, SUNDAY, JANUARY 19, 1913.

MURATS AN ODD FAMILY

Miss Helen Stallo's Fiance Has American Blood.

PRINCE MICHAEL'S CAREER

Some of His Ferbears Lived Here and Left Records of Amusing Actions.

In view of the impending marriage of Miss Helen Macdonald Stallo, daughter of Edmund K. Stallo, of Cincinnati, and granddaughter of the late Alexander Macdonald, as well as of Judge Stallo, who was American Minister to Italy in the first Cleveland administration, to Prince Michael Murat, it may be of interest to call attention to the fact that this stalwart six-foot-two scion of a house that for some years occupied the throne of Naples has a strong strain of American blood in his veins. For his grandmother, who died as Princess Lucien Murat, was a Miss Caroline Fraser, of South Carolina, of Scottish-Virginian descent. In fact, her elder children, the widow Duchesse de Mouchy; the late Prince Joachim Murat, father of the present head of the house; the late Prince Achille Murat, and Princess Caroline (who married, first, the Baron de Chassiron, and afterward John L. Gardin, lord of the manor of Rendisham, a large landowner and county magnate, of Suffolk), were all born at Bordentown, N. J., and spoke French with a distinct American accent, as did also Prince Louis Murat, the father of Miss Stallo's fiance, although born after the family had transferred its residence from the United States to Paris.

AN AMERICAN ALLIANCE.

Now does this constitute the only American matrimonial alliance of the Murats? For Lucien's elder brother, Achille, who from his seventh until his fourteenth year had figured among the reigning houses of Europe as Crown Prince of Naples, married, in 1836, a granddaughter of George Washington. She was the daughter of Colonel Byrd Willis, of Willis Hall, near Fredericksburg, Va., and of his wife, Mary Lewis, the niece of Washington. At fifteen she had married a Scotch-American of the name of Grey, who left her a widow a year later, with a child. She thereupon took up her residence with her father at Tallahassee, Fla., and it was there that at the age of twenty-three she met Achille Murat, who at once became a suitor for her hand. At first his advances were spurned, the widow declaring that the prince "had no breeding." Though the nephew of one of the greatest emperors in the history of the world, and the son of a king, she could not forget that the king in question was the son of an innkeeper of Cahors, and insisted that he was no match for the blueness of her Virginia blood. But at length his persistence and his devotion carried the day. She acceded him both her hand and her fortune, and they settled down to live comfortably on her large plantation in Florida, where he was a source of continual amusement to his neighbors, and of perturbation to his wife, by his oddities, which only her profound sense of humor enabled her to endure.

Thus, one of his hobbies was the cooking of everything that he could possibly lay hands on, and either endeavoring to eat it himself or trying it on others.

EXTRAORDINARY EXPERIMENTS.

On one occasion he nearly killed the slaves on the plantation by making them eat a dish in which cherry-tree sawdust was one of the chief ingredients, while he has left on written record as the result of personal experience that "alligator soup is tolerable, but the buzzard will not do at all."

One day, when the princess returned home from a visit, she found her husband smoke-begrimed, stirring clothes in an immense kettle, boiling over a fire which he had caused to be lighted in the courtyard. He greeted her with enthusiasm. "Oh, Kate!" he cried, "I have discovered a new dye, and I shall have made all your clothes a lovely pink!" She found that in that witches' cauldron was every gown that she possessed, except such as her maid had been able to conceal from her. Madame did not storm. She sat down and laughed until she was exhausted.

When the troubles with the Seminole Indians broke out in Florida, Prince Achille enrolled himself under the American flag and took part in the campaign. He even served a term as United States marshal in Florida, after the troubles were over, and died there toward the close of 1847, a few months before the overthrow of the Bourbon monarchy in Paris by the revolution of 1848 enabled the Murat family to return to France. His wife survived him for twenty years—that is to say, until 1867, often visited Paris, and was invariably welcomed with the utmost cordiality by Napoleon III, who had stayed with her in Florida during the early days of her marriage, when he was an impious exile and was never tired of listening to her stories of his cousin Achille's queer quips and oddities. She took a leading part in the presentation of Mount Vernon to the nation and lies buried beside Prince Achille Murat in the old graveyard at Tallahassee.

THE PRINCE ON TRIAL.

Prince Achille's brother, Lucien, the husband of Miss Fraser, and grandfather of Miss Stallo's fiance, was also a source of much amusement to the people among whom he lived while in the United States. Like most of the members of his family he was a giant in stature, and broad and heavy in proportion. The court records of Mount Holly, N. J., show that on one occasion he was tried there for assault. It seems that, having received a very insolent answer from a man of the name of Jeremiah White, in response to a courteous inquiry, he had sent the fellow flying through the air, with a single masterly kick. He conducted his own defense, which was characteristic. When called upon to answer to the charge of having kicked the man seven times, he drew forth from a bag the wire-mounted skeleton of the lower portion of a human back. Presenting it to the astonished eyes of the judge, the lawyers and jury, he pointed to the small concluding vertebrae of the spine and explained, in the most fantastic mixture of French and English, that those small and delicate bones were the beginning of what would have been the tail if the plaintiff had been a jackass. Then, raising his leg, bowed almost to the thigh with an enormous root, he exclaimed, as he snapped it with a resounding smack, "Why, if I have given even a single kick, thus," and dispatched a Trenton lawyer of the name

of his being connected, even as the mere husband of the principal, with an academic for young ladies, and the venture came to grief. After that there followed days of great stress and penury, which led Lucien Murat to endeavor to earn a living for his wife and children by all sorts of means, including a milk route, but nothing seemed to succeed, and for the last two or three years prior to his return to France, with his family, the marriage was to a great extent dependent on the charity of friends and neighbors.

Needless to say that the prince left

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and as such took part in the heroic charge of the French cavalry at Sedan, where he was wounded. But he was a terrible spendthrift, and it was his need of money which, especially after he had been obliged by the Boulangers how to resign his commission as general in the French army, led him to negotiate a matrimonial alliance with Miss Mary Caldwell, of Washington. The marriage was to a great extent dependent on the charity of friends and neighbors.

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